

REMARKS

Claims 9-15 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the present application is requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 15 and 16 include allowable subject matter.

Claims 9-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by US 2003/0158634 A1 to Hellmann et al. (the "Hellmann application"). Respectfully, the Hellmann application is not prior art to the present application. As an initial matter, the international filing date of the Hellmann application is not prior to November 29, 2000 -- the international filing date of the Hellmann application, at least as listed on the face of the Hellmann application, is April 6, 2001. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the present application is entitled, at the least, to the filing date of Applicants' International Application, i.e., **October 2, 2000**, which is prior to the international filing date of the Hellmann application, i.e., April 6, 2001.

The Hellmann application is not prior art to the present application under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). For at least this reason, the rejection of claims 9-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over the Hellmann application should be withdrawn.

Each of the issues raised by the Examiner has been addressed. It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims 9-16 are in condition for allowance. Passage to issuance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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